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REMARKS

Reconsideration and reexamination of the application are requested. Claims 1-5 and 9-11 remain pending.

Claims 1, 5 and 9 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Otani et al. (US 4,387,565).

In addition, claim 4 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Otani et al. (US 4,387,565).

Applicants respectfully traverse.

Otani does not disclose every feature recited in claims 1 and 9, and therefore does not anticipate the claims. For example, Otani does not disclose a flexible plate-shaped reed (claim 1), or reed means (claim 9), covering a valve hole that is divided into two spaces by a rib.

Otani discloses a reed valve device L that uses two separate reeds 28, one reed 28 covering each hole 26 (column 4, lines 37-42). One of the reeds 28 does not cover each hole.

In addition, Otani does not disclose a support substrate (claim 1), or support means (claim 9), having a rib that extends inside of the valve hole to divide the valve hole into two spaces. The rejection characterizes element 24 of Otani as a support substrate and element 32 as a rib. However, the element 32 in Otani is not part of the element 24 that is characterized as the support substrate. Thus, the element 24 does not "have" a rib as claimed. As shown in Figure 5 of Otani, the rib 32 is actually part of the housing 18 which is attached to the head cover 17. The rib 32 is spaced from the valve seat 24 by the elastic packing material 25 and is not part of the valve seat 24.

Nor do the reeds 28 contact the rib 32 nor are they adjacent to the rib 32. As noted above, the rib 32 is spaced above the valve seat 24 by the elastic packing material 25. At no time do the reeds 28 contact the rib 32 nor are they adjacent the rib 32.

For at least these, claims 1 and 9 are patentable over Otani. Claims 4 and 5 depend upon claim 1 and are patentable for that reason along and need not be separately distinguished. Applicants do not concede the rejection to claims 4 and 5.

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Applicants note with appreciation the indication that claims 2 and 3 recite allowable subject matter, and that claims 10 and 11 are allowed. The remaining claims are believed to be allowable for the reasons explained above.

In view of the above, early issuance of a notice of allowance is solicited. Any questions regarding this communication can be directed to the undersigned attorney, Curtis B. Hamre, Reg. No. 29,165 at (612) 455-3802.

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